



## Module 8

# Blood Collection – Finger Prick

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**Purpose** To provide you with necessary knowledge and skills to perform finger prick.

**Pre-requisite Modules** Module 6: Safety at the HIV Rapid Testing Site  
Module 7: Preparation for Testing – Supplies & Kits

**Learning Objectives** At the end of this module, you will be able to:

- Explain the preparation tasks required for rapid tests
- Put a client at ease while collecting blood
- Collect blood from a finger prick accurately and confidently

**Content Outline** Preparation for testing  
Educating your client  
Performing a finger prick

This module requires live demonstration and hands-on practice.

**Handouts** Job Aid: Finger Prick  
Video script: Initial Steps  
Video script: Finger Prick



Video: Initial Steps  
Video: Finger Prick

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**To achieve the learning objectives of this module, it is important that you attend a live training session where an instructor can demonstrate the procedures and supervise your hands-on practice. The information provided here is for your reference only.**

A video accompanies this module. Watch it if it is available to you. If you don't have the video, a copy of the video script is available for your review at the end of the module.

Videotape Section	VCR Counter Reading
Initial Steps	05:50
Finger Prick	11:35



**Video: Initial Steps**  
**(Duration 5:45)**

The video Initial Steps explains important steps you need to take before taking blood samples from a client. You are expected to be able to answer these questions after you have watched the video:

- What are the pre-test preparation steps?
- What safety precautions should you use?
- What should you look for in examining kits before use?
- How do you put your client at ease while performing the test?

Space is provided below for you to take notes during or after the video.

**What are the pre-test preparation steps?**

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**What safety precautions should you use?**

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**What should you look for in examining kits before use?**

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**How do you put your client at ease while performing the test?**

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**Video: Finger Prick**

**(Duration 3:00)**

The video Finger Prick explains important steps for taking blood samples from a client's fingertip. You are expected to be able to answer these questions after you have watched the video:

- How do you ...
  - Position the hand?
  - Decide which finger to use?
  - Clean the fingertip?
  - Use a lancet?
  - Ensure blood flow from your client's fingertip?
- Do you ...
  - Use a previously used lancet on a client?
  - Collect the first drop of blood?

Space is provided below for you to take notes during or after the video.

**How do you position the hand?**

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**How do you decide which finger to use?**

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**How do you clean the fingertip?**

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**How do you use a lancet?**

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**How do you ensure blood flow from your client's fingertip?**

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**Do you use a previously used lancet on a client?**

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**Do you collect the first drop of blood?**

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## Safety Precautions

It is important to follow universal safety precautions to protect your client and yourself when performing fingerprick. Remember to always:

- Wash hands before and after testing each client
- Put on gloves before collecting blood
- If blood is spilled, mop it up and disinfect the area immediately.



## Job Aid

A color job aid illustrating the fingerprick procedure is available for you so you may post them in your test site.



## Key message

- You must prepare your workstation and client prior to performing a fingerprick.
- Always follow universal safety precautions to protect your client and yourself when performing fingerprick.
- Follow standard operating procedure when performing a fingerprick.
- An accurate HIV Rapid Test result is dependent in part on the quality of the sample collected.



## Module Review

Find out how much you have learned by answering these questions.

**What do you check in a test kit before use?**

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**How do you put a client at ease while collecting blood?**

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**What supplies do you need for a finger prick?**

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**What are the steps when performing a finger prick?**

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## Module Review

Find out how much you have learned by answering these questions.

**What safety precautions should you follow?**

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## Video Script: Initial Steps

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You must complete the initial steps before performing any of the rapid HIV tests. These steps include making sure you have all your supplies such as:

- A timer or a watch for timing the tests,
- Gloves because you might come into contact with blood or blood products,
- Disinfectant such as Hypo chloride or bleach for cleaning your work area,
- A sharps container for disposing used lancets and other sharps,
- An autoclave bag or bucket to collect waste,
- A pen,
- A waterproof marker so the client identification doesn't get wiped away on the test device,
- Client forms and,
- Other appropriate record forms.

The rapid HIV tests that are demonstrated in this video can all use blood specimens collected from a finger prick. The supplies you need for a finger prick include:

- Gauze pads or cotton balls,
- Alcohol wipes or alcohol spirits, and
- Lancets,
- Sometimes a micropipette with pipette tips are used for collecting blood. Other situations require capillary tubes or loops.

Additional supplies include the rapid HIV test kits. Make sure that the kits are stored appropriately. Do not store them where the temperatures exceed 30 degrees Celsius. Also, don't store kits in an area with cleaning materials.

Some test kits are stored in the refrigerator. If so, bring them to room temperature before they're used, which takes about 30 minutes to an hour. Make sure the tests have not been previously opened or damaged. Check the expiration date before use. Do not use any tests that have expired because they could provide inaccurate results. Use only new and undamaged kits that are still within their expiration date.

As with any laboratory test you should always use universal safety precautions to provide safety for yourself, as well as for your client. Depending upon the resources in your region, these precautions should include

- using a new pair of gloves with each client and wearing a clean lab coat...
- washing your hands before and after you test a client, and
- in some situations eye protection.

You should also keep your work area clean by wiping it with disinfectant. Be sure to disinfect all spills.

Be cautious when using lancets, capillary tubes or other sharp objects. And dispose of all used items and materials in the appropriate sharps or waste container immediately after use.

Another part of the initial steps is to organize your work area so that you have space to work and your supplies are easy to reach. Make sure a chair is available for the client when you're performing a finger prick.

Next, determine the specimen you'll use for the test. Different rapid HIV tests require different specimens. Usually the tests are performed using whole blood collected from either a finger prick or drawn from a vein. Some tests can also be performed using either serum or plasma. Still other tests can use oral fluids. For more information on how to collect these specimens, review the companion training materials, or other reference books.

If the specimen you're using has been previously collected and stored in either the refrigerator or freezer, allow it to stand for at least 20 to 30 minutes to reach room temperature before using the specimen.

The final part of the initial steps is to educate the client. Sometimes the clients are uneasy or even fearful about having an HIV test. You can help put them at ease by describing what happens during the rapid HIV test. Assure the client that the procedure is safe for them and it's easy to perform. Explain that all of the supplies are new, sterile, and have never been used on another person. Next, describe the procedure. For example, tell them that you'll make a little prick that might sting for a second. Then you'll take a few drops of blood and perform the tests. Then tell them how long it takes to get their results and how they'll get them. Assure the client that the results are kept strictly confidential.

In review of the initial steps, collect all of the supplies not included in the test kit. Make sure that the test kit is stored properly and is at room temperature before you use it. Do not use tests that are opened, damaged or expired. Also gather the supplies needed for specimen collection. Follow the quality assurance plan for your testing site to ensure accurate and reliable testing.

Always use universal safety precautions to keep you and your client safe. Use a new pair of gloves with each client, and wear a clean lab coat, wash your hands before and after you test a client, and in some situations use eye protection. Keep your work area organized, clean, and disinfected. Discard all used items in appropriate containers. You will also need to determine the type of specimen that you'll use for the test.

And finally, educate the client. Explain that the supplies are sterile and have never been used on another person. And also describe the procedure and assure them that the test is safe and their results will be kept confidential.



## Video Script: Finger Prick

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Because all of the tests in this videotape can be performed using a drop of blood from a finger prick it's important to understand how to perform this procedure.

Position the hand palm-side up. Choose the fingertip of the ring, middle, or index finger, whichever is the least calloused. You can also use the thumb if it's the least calloused finger.

Once you've chosen which finger to prick, it may be necessary to apply intermittent pressure to the finger to help the blood flow to the fingertip. Clean the fingertip with alcohol. Start in the middle and work outward so as not to re-contaminate the area. Allow the finger to air dry.

Use a new sterile lancet for each person. Show the lancet to the client so they're reassured that it's new and unused.

Place the lancet off-center on the fingertip. For an auto lancet hold the finger and firmly press the lancet against the finger and puncture the skin.

When using a traditional lancet hold the finger firmly and make a quick firm prick. Dispose the lancet in a biohazard sharps container.

Wipe away the first drop of blood with a sterile gauze pad or cotton ball.

To help the blood flow you may need to hold the finger lower than the elbow.

Next collect the blood specimen. You may need to apply intermittent pressure to the base of the finger to help the blood flow. Because how blood is placed on test devices can vary from test to test, be sure to follow the manufacturer's directions.

For some tests you can simply collect the blood directly from the finger onto the test device. But other tests kits require an exact volume of blood to be collected. For these situations the instructions provided with the test kits, and your standard operating procedures, will indicate whether to collect blood using a disposable pipette, a loop, or a capillary tube.

After you've collected all the blood that's needed for the test, give the client a gauze pad or cotton ball to place on their finger until the bleeding stops. And finally, properly dispose of the gauze before the client leaves the testing area.

In review, to perform a finger prick, choose the least calloused fingertip and clean it with alcohol. Use a new sterile lancet for each person and show the lancet to the client. Place the lancet off center and firmly press the lancet against the finger and puncture the skin. Wipe away the first drop of blood with sterile gauze or a cotton ball. Next collect the blood. After you've collected all that's needed give the client a gauze pad or cotton ball to place on the finger until the bleeding stops. Dispose of the used gauze properly before the client leaves the testing room.